

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 5880

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIN, PINR, JM
SUBJECT: HERBERT WALKER TO HEAD BANK OF JAMAICA

REF: A. GENEVA 8200; B. KINGSTON 5537

1. HERBERT S. WALKER, A CAREER CIVIL SERVANT, HAS BEEN APPOINTED THE NEXT GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF JAMAICA (BOJ). WALKER, PRESENTLY JAMAICA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UN OFFICE IN GENEVA, SUCCEEDS G. ARTHUR BROWN, WHO RETIRED FROM THE BANK IN AUGUST. GLADSTONE BONNICK, DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF THE BOJ, HAS BEEN DESIGNATED ACTING GOVERNOR PENDING THE ARRIVAL OF WALKER.

2. WALKER'S APPOINTMENT AT THE BANK FOLLOWS A LONG CAREER OF FINANCIAL AND DIPLOMATIC ASSIGNMENTS. BORN FEBRUARY 29, 1924, IN ST MARY, JAMAICA, WALKER WAS EDUCATED AT KINGSTON COLLEGE AND MCGILL UNIVERSITY, WHERE HE RECEIVED A B.A. WITH HONORS IN ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE. HE STUDIED LAW AT MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY, WAS CALLED TO THE BAR AT GRAY'S INN, AND PRACTICED LAW IN LONDON FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

3. FROM 1950 TO 1957, WALKER SERVED IN BRITISH GUIANA, FIRST AS ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE ECONOMIC ADVISER, LATER AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY IN THE DEVELOPMENT SECRETARIAT, AND FINALLY AS DEVELOPMENT
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SECRETARY. HE RETURN TO JAMAICA IN 1957, SERVED IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AS ASSISTANT UNDERSECRETARY (1957-60), INVESTMENT OFFICER (1960-2), AND UNDERSECRETARY (ECONOMICS, 1962-65). IN 1965, WALKER WAS APPOINTED PERMANENT SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY, A POST WHICH HE HELD UNTIL 1972 WHEN HE TOOK UP THE GENEVA ASSIGNMENT. HE WAS ALSO NON-RESI-

DENT AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA, HUNGARY, ITALY, YUGO-SLAVIA AND EGYPT.

4. WALKER HAS BEEN A STRONG PROPONENT OF JAMAICA'S "THIRD WORLD" POSITIONS AND ITS NON-ALIGNMENT POLICY. HE HAS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN THE GROUP OF 77. IN THE LATE 1960'S, WALKER WAS DESCRIBED AS ANTI-AMERICAN IN HIS VIEWS ON A VARIETY OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS. IN RECENT YEARS, HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO EVIDENCE OF THIS ATTITUDE ALTHOUGH HE REMAINS A STURDY PROPONENT OF ECONOMIC REDRESS FOR THE LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE GOVERNORSHIP OF THE BANK WAS FIRST OFFERED TO HORACE BARBER, PERMANENT SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE. WALKER WAS THEN TO REPLACE BARBER IN FINANCE. BUT BARBER TURNED DOWN THE GOVERNORSHIP. WALKER THEN LOBBIED FOR THE JOB, AND WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE INFLUENTIAL MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING, RICHARD FLETCHER, GAINED THE APPOINTMENT.

6. WALKER WILL BE HARD-PRESSED TO DUPLICATE THE COMMANDING ROLE PLAYED BY ARTHUR BROWN. WHILE HIS BACKGROUND IN FINANCE IS RESPECTABLE, NUMEROUS SOURCES INDICATE THAT WALKER HAS A LESS CERTAIN UNDER-CONFIDENTIAL

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STANDING OF ECONOMICS.
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